Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the objection and rejections and further examination are requested.

Claims 5, 7 and 8 have been objected to as including informalities. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8 have been amended so as to address these informalities. As a result, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2 and 6 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter. The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter.

Claims 1 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashimoto (US 2002/008680) in view of Kado (US 6,666,738) and Hirano (US 2003/0030377). Claims 4 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kato (US 6,376,995) in view of Kado and Hirano.

The above-mentioned rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Hashimoto, Kado and Hirano, since claim 1 recites a method of aging a plasma display panel including, when applying a voltage having an alternating voltage component at least between the scan electrode and the sustain electrode to perform an aging discharge, applying an erase discharge-suppressing voltage for suppressing an erase discharge that occurs after the aging discharge to at least one of the scan electrode and the sustain electrode, at a predetermined moment in each of a portion of a period of the alternating voltage component of the voltage when the scan electrode has a voltage level that is higher than that of the sustain electrode and a portion of the period of the alternating voltage component of the voltage when the sustain electrode has a voltage level that is higher than that of the scan electrode. The combination of Hashimoto, Kado and Hirano fails to disclose or suggest this feature of claim 1.

Hashimoto discloses drive waveforms for a plasma display panel (PDP) 101C. In the drive waveforms of the PDP 101C, an assistant pulse for self-erase discharge is applied to an X electrode and a Y electrode. The assistant pulse for self-erase discharge is a pulse that is superimposed on the self-erase discharge, and assists in the generation of the self-erase discharge. (See paragraphs [0181], [0185] and [0186] and Figures 11A-11C and 32).

On the other hand, the "erase discharge-suppressing voltage" as recited in claim 1 is a voltage for suppressing an erase discharge generated following an aging discharge, and therefore,

the erase discharge-suppressing voltage recited in claim 1 and the assistant pulse for self-erase discharge disclosed in Hashimoto are completely different from each other. Therefore, Kado and/or Hirano must disclose or suggest this feature in order for the combination to render claim 1 obvious.

As for Kado and Hirano, these references are relied upon in the rejection as supporting the position that the driving method of Hashimoto, discussed above, which is used during the normal operation of the plasma display panel can also be used during an aging of the plasma display panel. However, it is apparent that neither of these references cures the deficiency of Hashimoto as set forth above. As a result, the combination of Hashimoto, Kado and Hirano fails to render claim 1 obvious.

Claim 4 is patentable over the combination Kato, Kado and Hirano, since claim 4 recites a method of aging a plasma display panel containing a scan electrode, a sustain electrode, and a data electrode, the method including, when applying a voltage having an alternating voltage component at least between the scan electrode and the sustain electrode to perform an aging discharge, applying an erase discharge-suppressing voltage for suppressing an erase discharge that occurs after the aging discharge to the data electrode, at a predetermined moment in a portion of a period of the alternating voltage component of the voltage when the scan electrode has a voltage level that is higher than that of the sustain electrode. The combination of Kato, Kado and Hirano fails to disclose or suggest this feature of claim 4.

Kato discloses drive waveforms of an electrode 23 (i.e., a data electrode), an electrode 22 (i.e., a sustain electrode) and an electrode 21 (i.e., a scan electrode) for a plasma display panel. (See column 27, line 59 – column 28, line 44 and Figure 51).

Based on the illustration in Figure 51, it is apparent that Kato does not disclose or suggest applying an erase discharge-suppressing voltage for suppressing an erase discharge that occurs after the aging discharge to the data electrode (i.e., the electrode 23), at a predetermined moment in a portion of a period of the alternating voltage component of the voltage when the scan electrode (i.e., the electrode 21) has a voltage level that is higher than that of the sustain electrode (i.e., the electrode 22). Furthermore, Kato is intended for causing a discharge between the electrode 22 and the electrode 21 and also between the electrode 23 and the electrode 21, by applying a sustain pulse to the electrode 23 and the electrode 22, but has no disclosure of an erase discharge, nor any disclosure of controlling an erase discharge generated following an

aging discharge by applying a voltage to the electrode 23. Therefore, Kado and/or Hirano must disclose or suggest this feature in order for the combination to render claim 1 obvious.

As for Kado and Hirano, these references are relied upon in the rejection as supporting the position that the driving method of Kato, discussed above, which is used during the normal operation of the plasma display panel can also be used during an aging of the plasma display panel. However, it is apparent that neither of these references cures the deficiency of Hashimoto as set forth above. As a result, the combination of Kato, Kado and Hirano fails to render claim 1 obvious.

Because of the above-mentioned distinctions, it is believed clear that claims 1-8 are allowable over the references relied upon in the rejections. Furthermore, it is submitted that the distinctions are such that a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention would not have been motivated to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in, or otherwise render obvious, the present invention as recited in claims 1-8. Therefore, it is submitted that claims 1-8 are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that there are issues remaining which must be resolved before allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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